

## To the Independent Planning Commission:

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Stephen Perry and I am objecting to the proposed Narrabri Coal Seam Gas Project as the water from the Great Artesian Basin is my life and livelihood.

I am a 6<sup>th</sup> generational grazier on the Marthaguy which is situated between Warren and Quambone on very fertile profitable country. I live on my grandfather's property which he purchased in in the district in 1934. I hope it will still be here for my children and grandchildren to inherit.

### **Water and Agriculture V's Gas**

At the end of the day it is about deciding which is more crucial and valuable to the future of Australia – water and agriculture or gas.

Agriculture is an industry that operates year in year out generating a regular economic benefit to the Australian economy and with this comes jobs. Agriculture does have a social licence unlike gas which will only operate for a short period of time and bring maybe 200 jobs only to Narrabri not to the remaining communities that will be impacted by the coal seam gas industry.

The question is will there still be a viable agricultural industry in the north west of NSW after this destructive dirty coal seam gas industry has desecrated the agricultural industry. No matter what Santos and the government would like us to believe agriculture and gas cannot and will not ever be able to coexist not unless you want a contaminated agricultural industry.

Throughout these generations my family have run a very successful and sustainable agribusiness of beef cattle, sheep and wool. We have only always been graziers. This is one of the reason I oppose the Narrabri Coal Seam Gas Industry.

Grazing in an industry that is solely reliant on water to be a viable enterprise. For me this water is the water from the Great Artesian Basin. Without it there is no longer any past, present or future! The great artesian basin is the largest underground water source in the world and supply's over 23 percent of Australia with reliable water that is millions of years old.

The Santos Narrabri Gas Projects model is based on suppling a short term gas supply. My model is based on 186 years and still counting of sustainable profitable agriculture. So I believe I have the knowledge and expertise past down from my ancestors in how to look after and pay respect for the land we live on so that it can continue and be viable for hundreds of years for generations to inherit not just 20 years of what appears to be short sighted profits to then leave the mess for future generations to repair if they can.

I am personally passionate about what I do and love this land that I am so lucky to have to have the dirt run through my fingers and be able to drink and wash my face with plentiful uncontaminated water is a privilege. I am fearful that this will be taken away so easily and I know that if we lose this liquid gold that flows out of the ground then it makes it impossible to fulfil my dreams and goals.

Over the years to improve our sustainability and increase the quality and profitability of the products we produce we have introduced many programs which means we have become

accredited in what and how we produce and market what we grow to the Australian and overseas markets.

These include: EU accredited, Grass Fed Accredited, Thousand Guinee's, MSA and Responsible Wool Standard Certified. These all offer a premium to our bottom line of income. So any change or contamination to our water would mean we would lose these accreditations and as a result a decrease in income.

There are no guarantees that this coal seam gas industry will not adversely impact prime agricultural land by depleting the aquifers and by contaminating ground water. With good clean water and air to continue to produce food and fibre for the world.

Once our water is contaminated we will not be able to sign the National Vendor Declarations so as a result will not have any markets to sell our stock.

Santos plan to depressurise the aquifers removing 37.5 billion litres of water. My water comes from the GAB so I wonder were my water then comes from?

This will then be coupled with the irreplaceable damage by drilling through the aquifers releasing chemicals into the water.

As the drought has proven you cannot run stock and have a sustainable viable enterprise without water!!!

We can coexist with renewable energy sources but will never be able to coexist with the coal seam gas industry. Stock need and require a peaceful existence using the best animal practices which is a requirement of the previous accreditations I have spoken about unlike what the gas industry brings with it.

CSG is not clean natural gas it will only lead to contaminating water and the environment.

CSG is not a clean natural gas as Santos would like us to believe this is only after it is extracted and the chemicals are left off into the atmosphere through the flaring process.

This project will only lead to contaminating water and the environment. The process leaves large deposits of salt and other elements which contaminate the food chain and surface water.

Renewable energy will be the cheapest way to provide energy and create employment in all communities in the North West of NSW not just Narrabri.

Agriculture as a whole in the NW of NSW would by far out way the gas industry in relation to profitability and jobs. Santos will employ a hand full of fly in fly out employees as opposed to the agricultural jobs in a sustainable and renewable agriculture of good clean food to feed the world.

I am fearful that this will be the start of gas fields being established over a much bigger area. So is this why so much is being invested into the proposed Western Slopes Pipeline which sits close to my property.

After a meeting with the former member for Barwon in 2017 and being informed that this project would go ahead at any cost as he dismissed the 22700 objections against this project. When asked

why the proposed Western Slopes Pipeline route was being considered where it is, his reply was "there is gas all the way". As I live not very far from the pipeline I became increasingly alarmed and realized this is going to be much bigger than 850 wells in the Pilliga or why have the remaining PELS not had their licences extinguished.

We have survived, drought, economic downturns and floods but Coal Seam Gas will destroy me today as well as the future. Supporting this project is showing disregard for rural Australia for the people who live and work here.

At the end of the day it is all about Water and Agriculture V's Gas!!! One thing I am 100% sure about is that we can all live without gas but no one or anything can live without WATER!!! So finally I ask who has the answers I believe it is in the generations of the past present and future. I hope there is a future with clean air and water something I believe we all have a right too. I ask who is responsible when it has all gone terribly wrong?

The greatest threat to farming in our region will be the development of coal seam gas activities in the Surat basin as it will eventually undermine and destroy the Great Artesian Basin.

This critical decision is now in your hands for a sustainable future so this Proposed Narrabri Coal Seam Gas project needs to be rejected.

Thank you  
Kind Regards  
Stephen Perry